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Quality of Structure and Teacher–Child Relationship: A Kindergarten–Childcare Services Comparison in Two Countries.

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Introduction

- ▶ Studies underlined the crucial importance of teacher–child relationship quality for children’s development in early childhood education (ECE).
- ▶ Results regarding structural variables that explain those relationships, in particular at an international level, remain much less consistent.

Structural quality

regulable factors, such as child-staff ratios, group size and staff training and education¹

Quality in early child care

Process quality

concerns children’s daily experiences while interacting with teachers, peers, and materials outcomes¹

Objectives

- ▶ Compare teacher–child relationship quality, as well as structural quality of the ECE services hosting 3 year-old children from two countries (France and Canada).
- ▶ Identify which structural quality variables explain the quality of the relationships.

Montreal

Grenoble

Program

Play-oriented education promoting global development: Five guiding principles based on constructivism and socioconstructivism

Program focused on fundamental learning and direct instruction; systematic instruction. Formal learning of the alphabet, numbers and writing

Pedagogical Perspectives

Initiated and child-directed learning activities. Promoting active learning through small group activities and focusing on socialization

Learning initiated and directed by the adult in which the children are more passive. Large group activities where all must perform the same tasks

Sample

▶ Montreal, Canada

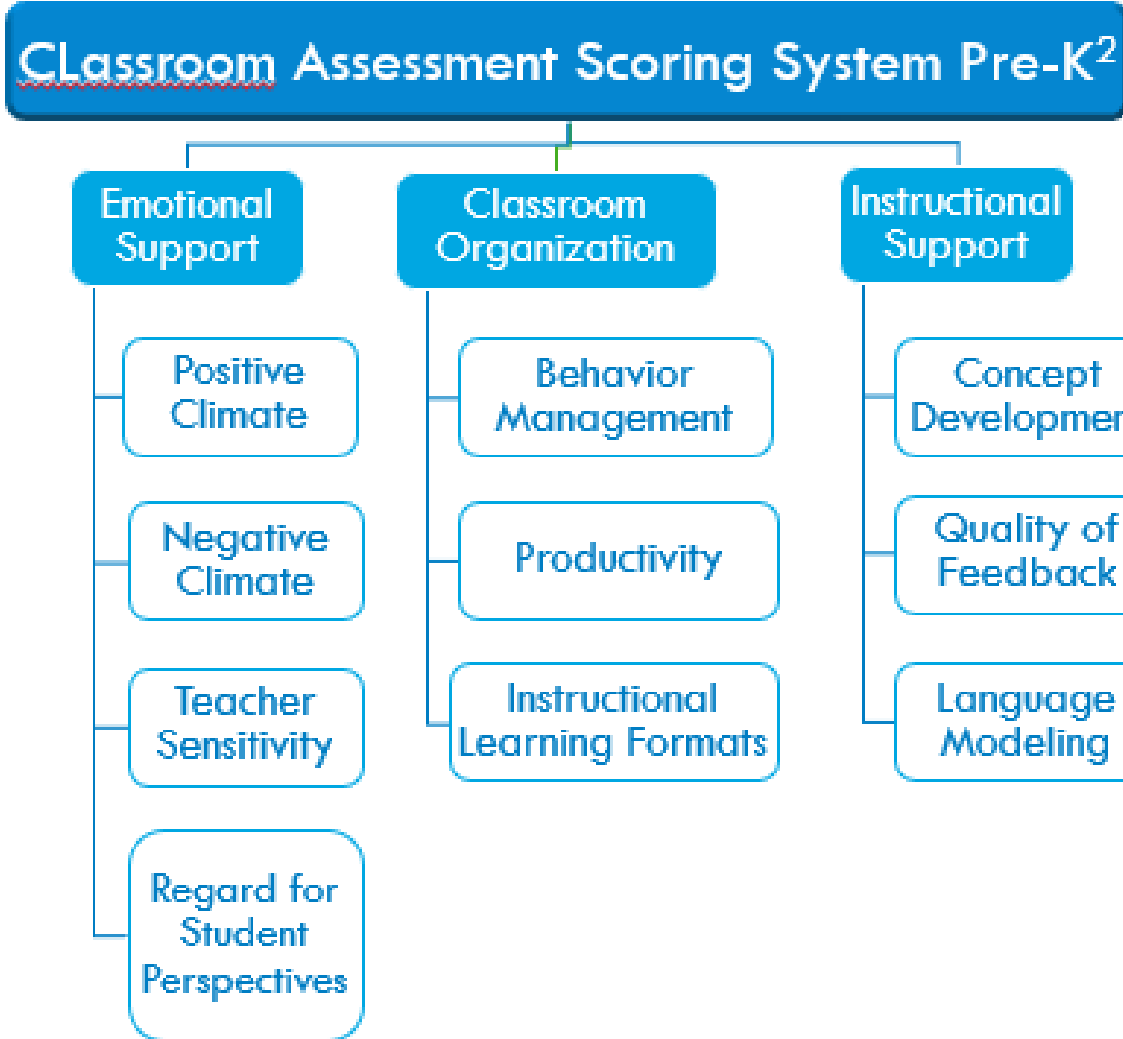
40 childcare centers
Recruitment: November 2016
Data collection: Spring 2017

▶ Grenoble, France

41 kindergartens
Recruitment: November 2017
Data collection: Spring 2018

Measures

- ▶ Observation with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)¹
- ▶ Questionnaire: experience and training levels, age, gender of educator and teachers and the group sizes in each class/group.



Results

Table 1.
Group Differences for Structural Quality Variables

		Childcare centers Québec		Kindergartens France		Total		Chi ² Test			
Structural variables		n	%	n	%	n	%	Chi ²	ddl	Sig.	V
Gender	Women	40	100	37	90.2	77	95.1	4.10	1	.043	.22
	Men	0	0	4	9.8	4	4.9				
Education Degree	College	33	82.5	0	0.0	33	40.7	57.08	1	.001	.84
	University	7	17.5	41	100	48	59.3				

Table 2.
Group Differences for Structural Quality Variables

		Childcare centers Montreal, Québec (n = 40)		Kindergartens Grenoble, France (n=41)		Mann-Whitney test			
Structural variables		M	SD	M	SD	t	ddl	Sig.	r
Experience level (year)		6.87	8.35	14.95	10.78	271.5	-3.36	0.001	-0.53
Group size		9.35	3.35	20.98	3.72	30	-7.25	<0.001	-1.15
		T-test							
		M	SD	M	SD	t	ddl	Sig.	r
Educators/Teachers Age		41.18	9.30	47.34	6.91	3.381	71.94	0.001	0.37

Table 3.
Group Differences for Process Quality Variables

		Childcare centers Montreal, Québec (n = 40)		Kindergartens Grenoble, France (n=41)		T-test			
Process variables (CLASS)		M	SD	M	SD	t	ddl	Sig.	r
Emotional Support		5.77	0.79	3.98	0.55	11.81	69.0	0.001	.82
Classroom Organization		5.64	0.83	4.16	0.76	8.32	79.0	0.001	.68
Instructional Support		2.75	0.69	2.20	0.51	4.12	71.65	0.001	.44

Table 4.
Summary of a Linear Logistic Regression Predicting Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support

		Emotional Support				Classroom Organization				Instructional Support			
Predictor variables		r	B	β	t	r	B	β	t	r	B	β	t
University degree		-.74**	-0.99	-0.43	-4.31***	-.63**	-0.73	-0.33	-2.78**	-.43**	-0.14	-0.10	-0.73
Class size		-.68**	-0.06	-0.35	-3.72***	-.59**	-0.05	-0.30	-2.71**	-.44**	-0.03	-0.30	-2.29*
Age (year)		-.44**	-0.02	-0.16	-2.10*	-.43**	-0.03	-0.21	-2.27*	-.42**	-0.02	-0.30	-2.82**
Gender = men		-.16	-0.27	-0.05	-0.73	-.13	-0.20	-0.04	-0.48	.01	0.19	0.06	0.62
R ² sig.		0.64 F(4,80) = 33.31, p < 0.001				0.48 F(4,80) = 17.61, p < 0.001				0.30 F(4,80) = 8.09, p < 0.001			

* p < 0.05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Conclusion

- ▶ The present study helped support previous findings, showing that greater regulation could be linked with a higher processes environmental quality in ECE programs³.
- ▶ Moreover, this study sheds light on the structure and processes of two different ECE systems for 3 year-old children in Western countries.

Work cited
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